

# THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT :

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## EDITORIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Next Meeting of the Association will be held at Wandsworth on March 21st, where the evening meeting will be supplemented by an afternoon programme of unusual interest, kindly arranged by Mr. W. T. Bradley, Principal Librarian, and Mr. Gatland, of the Clapham Library. The full programme is as follows :—

3 p.m. sharp.—Assemble at the Clapham Library, North Side, Clapham Common for a short tour of old Clapham, conducted by Mr. Gordon Maxwell, the well-known topographical writer, who will point out the sites of famous houses that have now gone, and give some account of the celebrities who lived in them.

After this interesting tour a visit will be paid to the new Earlsfield Library, and subsequently the Association will be entertained to tea in a local restaurant by kind invitation of the Wandsworth staff.

6.30 p.m.—Meeting of the Junior Section at the Newnes Public Library, Disraeli Road, Putney, S.W.15, where Mr. J. W. Gilliam, of the Croydon Libraries will read a paper "On Reading Aloud."

7 p.m.—General Meeting, Newnes Public Library, when two short papers will be read, both by members of the Wandsworth

staff, "Queen High," a literary paper by Miss Page, and a paper on "The Literary Associations of Wandsworth," by Mr. E. Callard. The Chair will be taken by Mr. W. T. Bradley, Principal Librarian.

This will be the first meeting held at Wandsworth for many years, and should receive considerable support, particularly from South London members.

*Clapham Library* is close to Clapham Common Station (South London Tube), and is also served by numerous tram services from various parts, and by 'buses and trams from Clapham Junction.

The *Newnes Public Library* is within a short distance of Putney Station (Southern Railway), and East Putney or Putney Bridge Stations on the District Railway. 'Buses No. 14, 37, 51, 74, and 96, and trams from most parts of London serve the immediate neighbourhood.

**Annual Meeting at Birmingham.**—The Council has decided to accept the kind invitation of the Midland Division, and to depart from its usual practice by holding the Annual Meeting for 1928 at Birmingham.

The Metropolis of the Midlands is very easy of access for many provincial assistants, and we trust that they will give the Council their wholehearted support in this venture. At this stage we can only assure all members that the Midland Division is sparing no effort to make this a red letter day in the annals of the A.A.L., and a wide response to their endeavours is the smallest return that we can render. With some small amount of organisation, it seems a quite practicable proposition to arrange for representative parties from several of our Divisions to attend. (*Divisional Hon. Secretaries please note!*)

Arrangements will be made for a party to travel from London at the reduced fare of 13s. 10d.—a sum within the reach of even the youngest member if a start be made thereto immediately. Hospitality will probably reduce further expenses to a strict minimum, and the Council asks every member to book up June (probably the 13th) for Birmingham. Further details will appear in subsequent issues as arranged.

**The Next Meeting of the Council** will be held at the National Library for the Blind, on Wednesday, March 7th, at 7 p.m.

**The National Library of Wales.**—On condition that £35,000 is contributed from outside sources the Government have promised a like sum towards the cost of completing the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. Over £10,000 have been promised,

and special efforts are now being made throughout Wales to raise the necessary funds.

The Librarian of the **Central Library for Students** informs us that three additional library systems have become associated with the Central Library for the purpose of acting as "Outlier" systems. These are the Chiswick Public Library, which has special collections on Chiswick, the life and work of Hogarth, and books issued from the Chiswick Press during its period at Chiswick, 1810-1852; Woolwich Public Library, which contains the following special collections: (a) the Skipworth Historical and Archæological Collection; (b) the Joseph Edwards Sociological Collection; (c) a collection of books on William Blake, and (d) a collection of books on Woolwich and Kent; and Middlesex County Library, which is strong in history, sociology, modern poetry and drama, and business methods. An excellent classified catalogue of the books in the history section has just been issued by Captain Wright.

**ASLIB.**—A lecture on "Systematic Bibliography: the Basis of Research," will be given by Mr. R. A. Peddie, at the Lecture Room, British Museum, on Wednesday, March 14th, at 4 p.m. The Chair will be taken by Mr. G. F. Barwick, B.A., late Keeper of the Printed Books, and Editor of "The ASLIB Directory." The books referred to in the course of the lecture will (by special permission) be on view in the Lecture Room.

Tickets of admission can be obtained free of charge, on application to the Secretary, The Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, 38, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1.

**Mr. Albert Mansbridge** will lecture on "The Citizen and the Librarian," on Wednesday, March 7th, at 5.30 p.m., at University College, London.

**The Birmingham Library** has opened a music section for the purpose of circulating gramophone records. Professor Granville Bantock thinks the enterprise is bound to stimulate a catholicity of taste for choral, orchestral, chamber, operatic and solo music. It would be interesting to have some further details of this new development, giving information on the period of loan, special guarantees, method of issue, etc. "The Year's Work in Library Studies" might well devote a small section to new methods, ideas, etc., which spring up during the year. In the library they originate from, these new developments are isolated, and if some scheme for collecting and correlating them, and then presenting them for general information could be started, we believe that every library system would benefit. At some future date, if possible,

the A.A.L. might consider the desirability of appointing a special correspondent to this journal who could get together information of this kind and present it to our members through the medium of these pages.

#### THE FEBRUARY MEETING.

Messrs. W. B. Prideaux, J. G. O'Leary, Cecil Piper, and J. E. Walker attracted a very fair audience to Sion College on Wednesday, February 22nd. The programme was a long one, and the atmosphere of the Lecture Hall was rather solemn and gloomy, but the interest taken in the subjects under discussion was made apparent by the number of people who spoke from the audience. As so much of the recommendations of the Departmental Report dealing with a Central Cataloguing Scheme concern the British Museum, we were very fortunate in having with us Mr. Arundell Esdaile, the Secretary of the Museum. His interesting remarks, often witty and always to the point, made a good opening for the full-length discussion on the papers presented. Mr. Piper dealt with the details of the scheme as suggested in the Report, but Mr. Walker, in a very trenchant manner, dealt with the many objections to the scheme, and with some hitherto little considered difficulties in the way. We are inclined to think that a good case for the adoption of a Central Cataloguing Scheme has still to be made out.

**Institute of Indexing.**—Notice was given in this journal some few months ago, of a proposal to form an Institute of Indexing. Information is now to hand that an Organising Committee is about to be formed with a view to undertaking a preliminary survey of the work to be done, etc. Those interested should apply to Mr. W. R. Douglas Shaw, "Beaufort," Mornington Road, Chingford, Essex. Mr. Douglas Shaw would particularly like to get into touch with those who would be prepared to give some practical help in the formation of the Institute.

**Library Association May Examinations.**—All those who desire to enter for the May examinations are reminded that the last day of entry is March 31st, but intending candidates are specially asked to make as early an application as possible. Notice should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Library Association, Public Library, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

#### THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRINTED ALPHABET.

By KENNETH G. HUNT, B.A., F.L.A.

(Supervisor of Branches, Tottenham Public Libraries.)

(Continued from page 33.)

We have now achieved one of the first objects we set before us. We have found the writing on which our modern type is based and we have seen how it descended from the letters used by the Romans but there remain several points for further investigation. Printing was not invented until somewhere between 1440 and 1450. Was the Caroline hand in use at this late period nearly 700 years after its

birth? We know that the early printers made use of black letter type copied from the script used for manuscripts of the period. What made them revert to the older script? To answer these questions we must carry our enquiries a stage further and survey the style of writing in use in the time of Gutenberg, Caxton and their successors.

The Caroline hand soon declined from its early standards of dignity, clarity and grace. Circumstances had artificially quickened its growth and it reached its zenith soon after it was originally launched upon its career. Its very perfection tended to permit carelessness on the part of scribes, who copied the forms of the script without properly appreciating their purpose and beauty. There was a natural movement away from a round hand and letters began to grow more and more angular. These tendencies can be traced in our own mediæval manuscripts for the Caroline hand was continued in England by the Norman invaders. Doomsday Book is fairly clear and easy to read. The letters of Magna Carta, as every schoolboy knows, are much more puzzling. Beauty is now sought in a new way. Just as in architecture the artistic impulses of the age found expression in pointed arches so in the art of calligraphy a definitely pointed hand was aimed at. In fact a new script was growing to perfection and developing from the earlier Caroline hand. This new style lasted throughout the rest of the Middle Ages and is known as Gothic. It was a product of the north. Though the general harmony of the completed line lent to it a certain air of beauty it had serious faults. It was essentially an artificial hand. Craving for effect led to an obscuring of the characteristics of each letter, and there was a great loss in clarity. The letters "i," "m," "n" and "u" were indistinguishable and words like "minimum" were unreadable except by examination of the immediate context. The best examples of Gothic handwriting come from France, Flanders and England, and the script became even more generally used than the Caroline had been. This was the script used by Gutenberg, Caxton and other early printers.

That these inventors of the printing art modelled their type on Gothic was only to be expected. The early success of printing was directly proportional to the degree in which printers succeeded in imitating the appearance of manuscript and it was only when their early achievements had directed attention to the special advantages of the new art that Printing was able to strike out in a line of its own. By a curious chance printing was invented about the same time as the general revival of learning throughout Europe, known as the Renaissance. The Renaissance in its earlier stages took the form of a close and feverish study of everything pertaining to Greek and Roman times. Old manuscripts were eagerly hunted for, read and copied, and every characteristic of the cultural achievements of the northern

European peoples, the racial descendants of the barbaric invaders of the Roman Empire, was contemptuously stigmatised by Italian scholars as barbarous or "Gothic."

Now it happened that early in the 15th century, after years and centuries of intermittent civil war, the city of Florence in Italy at last entered upon a period of peace and prosperity under the guidance of Cosimo de' Medici, one of its most illustrious merchant princes, and grandfather of the famous Lorenzo the Magnificent. Cosimo, like all his family, either through policy or inclination, was a distinguished patron of the arts and a typical product of the Renaissance. Himself well educated in Roman Literature he was a man of serious tastes who enjoyed the conversation of men of learning and possessed a remarkable facility for picking out those who really mattered. He was enormously rich and made his wealth the instrument whereby he was able to satisfy his studious nature. He gathered round him a small band of learned men who were all destined to play important parts in that cult of the classical we know as Italian Humanism. It was not to be expected that these Italian scholars, so full of veneration for everything Greek or Roman and so contemptuous of everything smacking of Teutonic origin, would be content for long to see the fairest flowers of classical literature reproduced in what was to them a barbarous and Gothic form of writing.

Among the learned men who settled in Florence under the benevolent patronage of Cosimo de Medici there rose to high regard a young Italian from the village of Terranuova named Gian Francesco Poggio Bracciolini, usually known as Poggio, who was born in 1390 and died in 1457. He studied Latin under John of Ravenna and Greek under Manuel Chrysoloras, one of Cosimo's imported scholars. Poggio's distinguished abilities and his dexterity as a copyist of manuscripts brought him great renown, and in 1402 or 1408 he obtained a post in the service of the Roman Curia. Spending his leisure in exploring old libraries he restored many masterpieces of Latin literature and supplied students with the texts of authors whose works had hitherto been accessible only in mutilated copies. Among his finds were the "Institutions" of Quintilian and ten orations of Cicero. Not content with merely locating their presence he made copies of them for the use of the learned. Quintilian, he tells us, "seemed to be stretching out his hands calling upon the Romans," and praying for rescue from the cruel hands of the barbarians. Early in his career Poggio won the friendship of Niccolo de' Niccoli (1368-1437) a child-like character who regarded himself as an infallible critic, and would not brook the slightest contradiction, however friendly was the spirit in which it was offered. Literary criticism at the time of the Renaissance was usually the reverse of friendly. Disputes over Aristotle or Plato degenerated into vulgar squabbles in which the strenuous adversaries

hurled accusations of murder, heresy and plagiarism against each other, and made biting remarks about their opponents' fathers, mothers, wives and sisters. So perhaps it was not remarkable that Niccoli was so jealously on his guard against opposition. He, like Poggio, was a member of Cosimo's little band of scholars. His chief services to classical literature consisted in his work as a copyist and collator of ancient manuscripts. There were over 800 in his own private library, which he left for the benefit of the citizens of Florence, many of them in his own hand. He spent all his money on literary research and when, after his death, the library was seized by his creditors, Cosimo redeemed it and enabled the intention of its founder to be carried out.\*

Scattered through the hundreds of old documents examined by Niccoli and Poggio were many written in a very clear and beautiful old script entirely unknown to them. What could this be, they asked themselves, but the original actual writing of the Romans? Everything seemed to point to it. The manuscripts themselves were very old and for all they knew to the contrary might quite well date from the classical age; the texts were great masterpieces of the Latin authors. It was then the general belief that there had existed in ancient times a beautiful style of writing, a "*Scriptura antiqua*" in which the literary works of the Romans had been written and published. This must be that very script, and here was a worthy and beautiful substitute for the Gothic handwriting of the northern barbarians. Poggio and Niccoli therefore definitely set themselves to restore this hand to general use and employed it in the copies they made of the old manuscripts they had found. Ambrosio Traversari and many zealous followers helped in the work of revival and the "humanistic minuscule," as it was known to later ages, became the general book-hand of Southern Europe. Of course, the models on which it was based were not Roman at all but consisted of that very Caroline minuscule which had had such a run of success six hundred years before and which was itself the ancestor of the Gothic hand Poggio and Niccoli so greatly despised.

The success of the restored Caroline hand was hastened by the invention of printing. Gutenberg, who was associated with the earliest piece of printing extant that can be definitely dated, Zell at Cologne, and Caxton, all used Gothic or Black-Letter types, but soon after the introduction of printing into Italy, types were cut in imitation of the revived Caroline minuscule used by the humanists. The first attempts were made at Subiaco in 1465 by Arnold Pannartz and at Venice in 1469 by John of Spira. The most successful early example of the Roman letter, as the style came to be known, came from Jenson's press at Venice in 1471, and Jenson's influence has affected the work

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\* Armstrong. Lorenzo de Medici, p. 334.

of our own master printers so late as the nineteenth century. Roman type was used in Paris a year before the date of Jenson's experiments. From these first beginnings the type soon became increasingly popular. For a time it was used in Italy for all sorts of purposes as the Gothic was in Germany. It was at first customary for each printer to cast his own fount of type, but after 1480 they began to buy their punches and matrixes, the result being that the same type is found in many places. At the end of the 15th century the two kinds of type, Roman and Gothic, are still in general use.

To these, in the first year of the new century, was added a third, and to explain the origin of this once more we have to go back a little. The age which had successfully and deliberately revived the Caroline minuscule as a book-hand invented also a new cursive hand for ordinary business purposes. This was done by sloping the Roman or Caroline letters to the right, narrowing them and putting ties between them. This new cursive scored a great triumph when in 1481 it was adopted for official use in the Papal Chancery and became known as *Cancellesca*. When Aldus Manutius looked round for a new type, he decided to base it on this cursive hand and the italic type used in his edition of Virgil published in 1501 was the result. Though beautiful in appearance and usefully compact the Italic letter is not nearly so easy to read as Roman type. However it was extensively used, specially for small books, throughout the sixteenth century.

The situation was rendered a little more complex in England by the persistence of certain styles of current hands. We have already seen how in every age before the invention of printing two main kinds of handwriting were in use—a formal and careful book-hand for literary purposes and a hurried script for legal and business necessities written as far as possible without lifting the pen from the parchment. In England these current hands were descended from the same original source as the book-hand of the period, are found in every kind of public and private record, and were practised extensively by the scribes of the government departments, the tonsured clerks, professional scriveners, notaries public and the large body of laymen who had to keep accounts, note down memoranda, and conduct correspondence in the course of their daily business. Out of one of them was evolved a less formal kind of early black letter used by Caxton in his *Type No. 2*. The "*Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*," printed in 1477—the first dated book from Caxton's press—is an example. On the whole, however, Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde and the other early English printers distinctly favoured the Gothic text-hands, whose ultimate development was the most formal kind of "*Black-letter*" such as we can see to-day in the title of the *Times*. In 1508 Richard Pynson introduced Roman letters into England and in 1524 Wynkyn de



Worde followed his example of imitating Continental models and began to use Italic. Roman and Italic did not at first make much headway. In the time of Elizabeth English printing owed much to Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, a cultured man of wide reading and a great collector of books and manuscripts. He encouraged the English printers to produce well-printed and artistic books, and was well in touch with printing practice in France and Italy, but despite his influence Gothic and Black-letter continued to form a large part of the stock in trade of the English printer. Even such a clever and important craftsman as Reginald Wolfe (1542-1579) though he owned 27 founts of type, only possessed 8 in Roman and 6 in Italic. Of the remainder 6 were black letter, 3 Gothic and 4 Greek. Not till the time of John Day did Roman first begin seriously to oust the other types in use in England. In 1572, Day began to use the first fount of Roman type cast in England. This was copied from a letter made in 1565 for the famous Antwerp printer Plantin.

We have now seen printed imitations of the "Roman" letter of the time of Charlemagne fairly launched on their career throughout Western Europe. The Roman type soon held sway throughout the Mediterranean countries of France, Italy and Spain—those lands in fact which had been longest under the sway of the Roman Empire and in which a greater element of Roman tradition was preserved than in any other parts of Europe. Gothic continued to flourish in Teutonic countries, and it is to-day the predominant script in Germany and German Austria. Till the last century it was used in Scandinavia. In England after a long struggle it was ousted. The success John Day attained persuaded other printers to print only in Roman letters and by the 17th century Roman was well established. This type in almost innumerable modifications is that familiar to us at the present day, though it included three letters, J, j, U, u, and W, w, which were not represented in the Roman alphabet and whose origin is not explained by the processes which have given us our other printed characters.

In the days of the Caesars the sounds of "u" and "v" were represented by a single letter resembling our modern "v." In uncial writing the appearance of this letter underwent certain modifications, with the ultimate result that it resembled our present day "u." In the middle ages the two letters "u" and "v" were used indiscriminately. U might stand for "u" or "v" and "v" might stand for "v" or "u." The early printers followed the mediaeval custom for small letters but for capitals they used only "U" in black letter and "V" in Roman type. In the 16th century continental printers began to distinguish between "u" and "v" using the former as a vowel sound and the latter as a consonant. By the year 1630, this practice began to be general in England, but it is only since the opening of the

18th century that the regular forms have been U, u for the vowel and the V, v for the consonant. Like "u," W is an addition to the ancient Roman alphabet, and is derived from a doubling of the Roman letter represented by the U and V of modern alphabets. In the 7th century, the scribes who first used the Latin alphabet for the writing of English found that they had to invent a symbol for the sound of W, which had no counterpart in the Latin of that time. Instead of using a single "u" or "v" they avoided ambiguity by using two. This practice was soon superseded by the use of the rune, but was adopted on the Continent and reintroduced into England by the Normans. By 1200 it had superseded all other forms. The character "W" was probably considered a single letter at a very early date, but it never lost its original form of "double u." Our modern letter "j" was derived from "i" in the middle ages by lengthening that letter at the end of a word to avoid ambiguity. A common example is in the figures ij, iij, iiij. The final differentiation of the two characters, both in form and value, was not completed until 1640, though for many years there was a feeling that they were only forms of the same letter, a feeling which can still be traced in the absence of the letter J from the signatures used by printers for marking the sections of a book.

By the end of the 17th century then, Roman letters had won the day in England, as in France and Italy, though as we have seen, the older forms lasted for some considerable time. Their hold upon the English printer may be seen from the fact that right to the end of the 18th century "English Face" was the technical term for black-face or Gothic. To-day it survives only as an ornamental script, and we see it sometimes in stained glass windows where perhaps its comparative illegibility is not a matter of very great importance. Also, for some obscure reason, it is still used in the word "Whereas" in legal documents. With Gothic for ornament, Roman square capitals for initials and the "Roman" (or as we know it "Caroline") and Italic scripts for ordinary purposes the printer's stock in trade by the year 1600 was for practical purposes as complete as it is to-day. Into the later developments of the art, into the difference between Old Face, Old Style, and Modern Face, into the contributions of Fell, Caslon, Baskerville, Morris and a host of others I cannot attempt to enter. It is beyond my scope this evening to concern ourselves with the modifications of detail. All I set out to do was to trace the processes whereby our modern printed characters possess their present general form.

There is one point perhaps which I have not quite elucidated. One of the questions I have stated at the beginning of this essay, was, since printed characters are based on written letters, why does handwriting of to-day differ from our printed forms of the alphabet? The obvious answer is of course that as soon as printing was practised

and a particular style of type came into general use, that style tended to become fixed. It could be repeated in identically the same characters time after time. Also while printed books originally resembled manuscript books either Gothic or Roman, they were not in the same style as the so-called "current" handwriting used for ordinary purposes, though this was a direct descendant of the same common ancestor as the book hand of the time. One exception was Caxton's Type No. 2. Another was Italic, which was definitely based on the current style of writing in use in Italy as a result of the Renaissance. Though not quite within the scope of an enquiry into the development of our printed alphabet, it is germane to our purpose and relevant to a discussion on the difference between printed and written characters to survey shortly the influences that came to bear upon current writing in England after the invention of printing.

A result of the activity of hundreds of printing presses in every country in Europe was that the professional writers and beautifiers of manuscript books were left with very little to do. Fortunately for them, the age which took away one means of livelihood provided them with another, and instead of swelling the ranks of Elizabeth's sturdy beggars in England, as in other countries, they were able to amass quite considerable fortunes by teaching the art of calligraphy to others. That there was a demand for such teaching was due indirectly to the far-reaching consequences of the Renaissance. Life took on a fuller and wider aspect, and it was more than ever necessary that the educated man and woman should be able to write easily and well. Directly, need for their help arose from the introduction of Cancelleresca, the humanistic cursive to which we have already referred, the hand on which Italic was founded. The teaching of this new hand did not displace older current forms of writing. The Writing Master\* made it his business to teach both the old and the new. In fact he did more than this. He turned to the old forms and beautified them. The result was that his services were everywhere in demand. The art of printing and later the introduction of copper-plate engraving made it possible for him to introduce the correct forms of the styles he taught to a very wide public. By 1580, more than twenty masters had produced books of rules and copies. A book by the Italian Tagliente went through seventeen editions between the years 1524 and 1565, and such successful publications were not exceptional. The first book of this kind published in England was not issued until 1571, a work by two authors, one English and the other French.

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\* For the activities of the Writing Masters see an article by Jenkinson in "History," Vol. II, p. 211-218 and also his book "The Later Court Hands in England."

However writing masters had been busy in England long before this date. There is a tradition that the Italic was introduced into England by Petrus Carmelianus, Latin Secretary to Henry VII. By Italic I mean here of course the written Italic, the hand we have already known as Cancelleresca by reason of its adoption by the Papal Chancery, the hand the humanists invented as a current counterpart of the revived Caroline minuscule. With the launching of a new script it follows that there was a demand for skilled persons to teach it and the fact that there was a very large increase in the numbers of scribes registered in the "Company of Writers of the Court Letter" between 1526 and 1550 points to that period as the beginning of the writing masters' influence. Need for tuition in the art of writing was felt also in the schools and in this connection it is interesting to note that in the first constitution of Christ's Hospital there is mention of a special "Teacher to write." It was the feeling that the schools might cater for the Scribes, Notaries and other business men who had hitherto only picked up their knowledge of writing in a casual haphazard fashion that really prepared the way for the advent of the Writing Masters.

I have dwelt on their coming at some length because of the very considerable influence they exerted on the development of handwriting in England. They not only taught the new Italic hand, called by Malvolio the "Sweet, Roman hand" but, as they found a demand for the older styles of writing, they brought them too within their scope. They took the hand on which Caxton's modified black-letter was based, the hand that was in general use in England for business purposes before the irruption of the Italic, and beautified and adorned it, ridding it of all its bad and ugly characteristics, so that under the name of Secretary it was still in Elizabeth's reign one of the recognised hands of the day. Everyone then wrote at least these two hands and the process which evolved from Italic and Secretary our present day round hand was a very gradual one. For a hundred to two hundred years the two hands are mixed according to individual taste and from their combination our modern hand slowly developed, retaining even into the last century a considerable proportion of archaic forms.

This brings us at last to the end of our short and necessarily general survey. We have now seen why our written alphabet is so different from our printed characters, we have seen how these are descended from the humanistic minuscule of the Renaissance scholars which was itself a revival of the Caroline script which developed in France or Italy during the eighth century, and we have seen how the Gothic script still in use in Germany is descended from a later and very different form of this same script. The achievement of a minuscule hand was

the great calligraphic achievement of the Middle Ages, but nevertheless its roots went far back into the past, and we have followed the lines of its development. It arose as the culmination of a long series of unconscious experiments in the combination of certain elements of the cursive script of the business world with the uncial writing used by both professional and monastic scribes. Both these forms were descended, one directly and the other indirectly from the same common ancestor, the majuscule letters of classical times. We have found that there is a very real continuity in the development of handwriting as there is in the development of nations which it so often reflects. And though the connection is involved and complicated we can truly say that our modern printed alphabet is partly an inheritance from Imperial Rome and partly a very real and characteristic achievement of the Middle Ages.

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#### APPOINTMENTS.

\* Farnol, Miss E. J., Junior Assistant, Hove, to be Assistant in Charge, Reference Library, Hove. (Six L.A. Certificates, two with honours.)

\* Talmey, Miss F. L., Assistant in Charge, Children's Library, Hove, to be Assistant Librarian, Hove, in succession to Mr. Henry Mew, who has just retired after 35 years' service. (Six L.A. Certificates, two with merit.)

\* Engall, F. S., Senior Assistant, Fulham, to be Branch Librarian, Greenwich. (Six L.A. Certificates; salary, £232—£332. Also selected: Messrs. Bigg (Cardiff); Cronshaw (Oldham); and Rennie (Gateshead).

Barracclough, Miss Kathleen, Diplomate of the Sch. of Librarianship, to be Junior Assistant at Morecambe Branch Library.

\* Snaith, Stanley. Senior Assistant, Kingston-on-Thames, to be Chief Assistant, Islington Central Library. Salary £240 + £15—£270. Also selected: Messrs. Biggs (Cardiff); Roberts (Puney); and \*Wright (Earlsfield).

\* Members of the A.A.L.

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#### NEW MEMBERS.

MEMBERS: Clara G. Reeves (Central Library for Students), Mary Judd Williams (Monmouth County).

ASSOCIATE: Winifred V. Boyd (Ilford).

MIDLAND: Mildred Lilian Bull (Rugby).

SOUTH COAST DIVISION: Hilda Alcott and Marjorie Hyams (Brighton).

YORKSHIRE DIVISION.—MEMBERS: C. Michel and H. Bateson (Leeds).

ASSOCIATES: Misses L. Robins, M. Snowden, I. Walker, G. Holdsworth, C. Martin, and Messrs. M. White, C. Craven, J. Egarr (Bradford). Miss M. E. Mensforth and H. Rust (Ilkley).

## THE RETURN TO EVALUATION.

By STANLEY SNAITH.

(*Senior Assistant, Kingston-upon-Thames Public Library.*)

It is in the nature of things that in controversy even the most fervid protagonist must tire at last, and the most passionately argued subject either perish or come into its own. The library movement, like every other movement that is truly alive, has struggled to fulfilment only over the bones of battles dead and gone. The thunder of the open-access controversy has passed away, the wounds are staunched. The sheaf and the card catalogues have called a truce. The newsroom has outlived its enemies. Those leviathans Dewey and Brown have lain down together in amity. Upon the fields of librarianship a hallowed calm has fallen.

Of the many bones of contention which appear to have been securely buried, that which seems to me to be most deserving of disinterment is evaluation in cataloguing. Like prohibition, it has never been popular. Cataloguing itself after a brief affray contrived to assert its claims; but about evaluation there has always clung—perhaps because it came from America—an odour, an atmosphere subtly suggestive of disrepute. From the beginning the majority of English librarians subjected it to the most baleful scrutiny, and have been avoiding it like the rabies ever since. The rawest junior assistant holds his nose in handling it. Every student of cataloguing is carefully told by his mentors that it is a doctrine pernicious in the extreme, exactly as the student of literature is told that Massinger is coarse, and the musical student that Beethoven was a gentleman. And it goes without saying that he believes it; for the subject makes an annual appearance in examination papers, and it is poor policy to quarrel with examiners. "State whether in your judgment evaluation is to be defended," threatens the examiner; and the dutiful aspirant—who, quite properly, would violate a thousand truths for a "pass" and ten thousand for "honours"—belabours the puny offender with as much indignation as if the matter were a personal grievance. For years after the examination—perhaps for the rest of his life—he continues to revile evaluation, probably transferring to it the loathing which he feels towards cataloguing itself. In short, evaluation, despite a few doughty champions in the past, is a valuable scapegrace but a dead cause.

But the significant feature of dead causes is their habit of exasperatingly coming to life again. They have not nine lives, but ninety-and-nine. History, remember, is cyclical. The truth

of yesterday is the fallacy of to-day, and—completing the circle—the truth of to-morrow. State the most irrefutable verity often enough and eloquently enough, and opposition will automatically arise. Let the opposition banish and discredit that verity, and at once its restoration will become the ideal of a minority. I do not think that evaluative annotation will be an exception to this rule. It will not surprise me if its decline in America (where, as we know, it has enjoyed a vigorous lease of life) synchronises with its revival here. When that takes place I shall, as a rational human being, arise from my bath-chair and smite it hip and thigh. At present it is an unpopular cause, and nothing shall deter me from espousing it.

Before dealing with the case for evaluation—or “appraisal”—let me rapidly synthesise the counts upon which it is commonly blackballed. There are several arguments to consider—or, more precisely, several variations of one argument. Thus, evaluation can have no authority, and therefore no place in a library catalogue, because it is no more than an expression of opinion. Opinion is too often prejudiced, and is *ipso facto* misleading. Its tendency is to arouse the ire of intelligent readers who dissent from it. The practice is dishonest because it endows such prejudices with a spurious officiality and an illusion of authority. Further, the librarian would be presumptuous to usurp the rôle of critic; and in any case, the finest criticism is nothing more than an individual judgment, and as such demonstrably fallible.

Now in the pedagogic seclusion of the text-book, and in the examination room, these are undoubtedly telling arguments, arguments time-honoured and safe. They have a dramatic ring of conviction. But let us proceed to examine them and discover for ourselves whether they are so irrefragable as they sound.

In the first place, it may be admitted that all aesthetic criticism is personal. For that matter, human endeavour of every kind is personal. Criticism becomes “authoritative” when a sufficient number of thinkers find a basis for agreement, and can persuade the rest of humanity (which has no ability to think for itself) to accept that basis. But a principle so arrived at ought not to be regarded as anything more than a temporary protocol. There are no immutable principles, simply because the mind of man is perpetually changing. All our standards of judgment are at best flimsy and provisional, laws tenable only by virtue of expressing contemporary consciousness. They grow obsolete exactly as parliamentary laws grow obsolete, and for the same reason. In every century a host of writers are praised, and as many damned; then a revaluation follows, a refining of the gold from the dross. And yet again the gold is sifted and alloy found, and from the

rejected dross still more gold is salvaged. And so the process goes on, each generation firmly believing that the gold and the dross are segregated once and for all. To-day we are eloquent in extolling Traherne, Donne, Masefield, Congreve, and the eighteenth century *en bloc*. Yesterday it was Tennyson, De Vere, and Mr. Tupper. In the next decade, for all we know, Mr. Tupper may make a dignified reappearance in a limited edition from the Somesuch Press. True, we join with our forefathers in admiration of Shakespeare, Homer, Keats. They appear to be established. But nothing is more certain than that they will one day be completely forgotten, or survive merely as legendary names, gods supplanted by new gods.

But if we are to accept this relativist conception of criticism—and it is as good as any—it may be argued that, far from demolishing the claims of evaluation, it actually goes far to substantiate them. Try to postulate a librarian with a wide knowledge of books and a catholic taste, and with a mind permeated, as every progressive mind is, by the critical diathesis of his generation. Imagine him evaluating books, not in the slapstick fashion of which the anti-evaluationists go in fear, but scrupulously, shrewdly, subtly. He would commit solecisms which a subsequent generation would laugh at? I willingly grant it. But is the opinion of the next generation of the slightest relevancy? Bear in mind that a catalogue is not a Parthenon, it is a temporary convenience. Every catalogue in England—evaluative and non-evaluative alike—will be a monstrosity, a curio, in fifty years. Nay more, the majority of the books themselves will have become so much waste paper. Therefore, in characterising the literary and other qualities of our stock we can draw upon our experience and knowledge without fear of future chastisement. If an opinion is valid to-day, then it is valid and consequently worth saying. The cataloguer's sole business is to serve his age, and if his evaluation interprets the aesthetic temper of that age, it is as much a paradoxism to revile him for his mistakes as it would be to dump the entire staff of the "Times Literary Supplement" in the pillory for theirs. The librarian, in short, as a qualified thinker has the same right—the same duty—to speak his mind as the critic, the cleric and the publican. Admit that criticism is relative and provisional, and, willy-nilly, you are crusading in the cause of evaluation.

It may—and, I hope, will—be contended that the librarian of such impeccable literary status as I have postulated is a *rara avis*, and perhaps even an illusion of my own. I do not think so; but if I did I should not regard the fact as in any way invalidating my argument. If the whole House of Commons drank a dozen



whiskies each before assembling, and then cleared the floor for dancing, I should regard the occurrence as indelicate. But would I proceed to express my displeasure by throwing a bomb into the senatorial wigwam? Certainly not. I should decry the worthy members and not the institution itself. Analogously, the incapacity of the library profession to carry out a sound principle with fidelity and tact would be a weakly argument against that principle.

Another of the counts I have mentioned can be dismissed in a few words. When our reading public begins to cavil at our judgments I shall be the first to applaud. At present it receives our pronouncements, and observes our valuable work, with the *insouciance* of a chamber-concert audience. The truth is that it is no more likely to quarrel with our cataloguing than a Rotarian is to kick his president downstairs.

The clear and inescapable truth emerges that evaluation is an imperative necessity if a catalogue is to be the intermediary between books and readers that we wish it to be. If the consulter of a catalogue is to be told anything about books beyond their titles, it is a grudging help that neglects to indicate their comparative merit. It is not enough to assure a reader that there are none but good books in the library, and certainly it is not true. It is not enough to regard books as self-explanatory, and the reader as a person to be allowed to form his own judgments. We are all agreed that the pre-eminent function of a library service is the development of literary discrimination. If there is any way of accomplishing this save by repeatedly drawing attention to the best books, then I must plead ignorance of it. A catalogue which is prepared by evaluative method is a potent influence for good; the catalogue without evaluation is a Samson shorn.

Imagine for a moment that a catalogue of the latter type is before us, its riches buried, its tritons and minnows heaped together without distinction. We look up, let us say, Sir Thomas Browne. The entry is there: "Works, 3 vols." Almost certainly the contents will be set forth, and we have no difficulty in finding the item we desire, "*Hydriotaphia*." This is explicated by an annotation, or expansion of the sub-title, informing all and sundry that the subject is the primitive customs of urn-burial among different races. (It is nothing of the sort—its subject is the oldest and newest known to man, the majesty of death.) There will be nothing more. Nothing to differentiate it from a seventeenth century sermon or a flat-footed treatise on archæology. Nothing to indicate its Magian eloquence, its towering importance in literary history. Instead, that silence which is the most vicious obscurantism.

Another instance. Cataloguing as an evaluationist, I decide to call attention to the peculiar qualities of Alice Meynell's prose. The temptation is iniquitous, but not to be resisted. I cannot conscientiously dismiss her with such general terms as would describe a contributor to, say, "The Bookman." I will avoid fulsomeness: but it is necessary to employ a carefully differentiating term. In a prose article I could use a score; but in cataloguing I content myself with one or two, such as "austere," or "subtle," or "profound," or perhaps "exquisite." My words, well chosen as they are, might, for all I know, stimulate at least one reader to enquiry. Is this sort of thing laudation? It is laudation. But it is more than that; it is also strictly, descriptively accurate. That prose is austere, exquisite, subtle, profound, let those deny it who dare. It is quite beside the point that a decade hence such a judgment will be deemed infantile. For the present it is the soberest truth, in other words the verdict of the age. No truth is anything more than that.

Allow me to revert for a moment. I have referred, for convenience' sake, to non-evaluative catalogues. Here we may steal another shot from our opponents' armoury. Excepting that pliocene relic, the title-a-line list, there is no such thing as a non-evaluative catalogue. The very act of annotation implies appraisal. Consider a moment. We annotate, let us assume, a study of the peoples of Northern India. Fishing in those time-sanctioned Tom Tiddler's Grounds, the preface, the introduction, and perhaps the dedication, we discover that the book is the result of a three months' tour. We make a point of stating this. Why? Because we desire the reader to draw the natural inference. In other words, we euphemistically lay it down that the book is likely to be scamped and superficial. But imagine that we possess another book on the subject, this time with a note stating that the author has lived in that territory for a number of years. The implication is that the first book is much less thorough than the second. In other words, the two books are vicariously compared and evaluated. Very well. But suppose the comparative estimate is in this case misleading. What if the latter book is divagatory, confused, pompous, and the former precise and packed with shrewd observation? Are we to enlarge our notes to make this clear, or must we by a slavish respect for tradition allow the reader to be misled? The root of the whole matter is that by implicit appraisal we appraise badly, whereas by an honest acknowledgement of the necessity for appraisal we can at least achieve consistency and make ourselves useful.

Let us forget all that the instruction books have told us, and rid ourselves once and for all of the spectre of the examiner. Let

us get this clear in our minds. The whole process and purpose of evaluation is, not to extol and decry books, not to exalt the *obiter dicta* of the smoking-room into rhetorical dogmatism, but simply to amplify the utility of the catalogue and make it something more than a descriptive list. Where annotation stops, evaluation begins. Annotation grades books by subject, approach, and other features. Evaluation draws more delicate, more fundamental distinctions, outlining a greater diversity of differences and likenesses. The annotator sees books as books, the evaluator as literature. By annotating we draw up a plan of knowledge as represented in books; by evaluating we transform the plan into a cosmography, with the aid of which the literary argonaut can find his way with ease. On the day on which a discriminating evaluation is adopted in English libraries—and, unless I am sadly mistaken, it is coming—the catalogue will become our most subtle and effective instrument, not only our guide to books, but a schedule of their worth; not only an appendage to literature, but an education in itself.

## LIBRARY ASSOCIATION EXAMINATIONS, DECEMBER, 1927.

### LIST OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES.)

#### SECTION I.—LITERARY HISTORY.

62 Candidates sat.

Honours 1, Merits 8, Passes 37.

#### Honours.

\*Fleet, Miss C. A., Portsmouth.

#### Merits.

Catenby, Miss J. L., Sunderland.

Gillies, Miss I., Glasgow.

\*Marston, Miss E. M., Birmingham.

Parry, Miss E. J., Cheltenham.

\*Price, Miss N. M., Birmingham.

\*Shorthouse, Miss I. M., Birmingham.

Spear, Miss M., Newport.

Woolcock, Miss H. E., Gillingham.

#### Passes.

\*Bennett, Miss K. R., Portsmouth.

Berry, Miss M. I., Bolton.

Bowman, W., Sunderland.

Brandreth, Miss W., Sheffield.

Bromwell, Miss G. N., Birmingham.

Brown, T., Edinburgh.

\*Carr, Miss L. M., Croydon.

Cockburn, J. W., Edinburgh.

Dow, A., Bolton.

Dunn, Miss P. I., Birmingham.

\*Evans, Miss N. M., Portsmouth.

Gilchrist, Miss N. H., Edinburgh.

\*Godber, Miss W., Sheffield.

Gough, Miss E. M., Bolton.

Hall, F. W., Sheffield.

\*Hatton, E. G., Warrington.

Hobbs, E. J. H., Tunbridge Wells.

\*Homewood, Miss B. E., Croydon.

Husband, Miss E., Glasgow.

Judd, Miss I. E., Birmingham.

Kerr, Miss E. M., Glasgow.

Mercer, Miss L., Birmingham.

\*Payne, Miss E., Portsmouth.

Phillips, Miss M., Carlisle.

Pratt, Miss A. McG., Glasgow.

Raeburn, A., Glasgow.

\*Revie, J., Cardiff.

Rowell, R. T. G., Exeter.

\*Straughan, Miss M., Darlington.

Sutton, Miss E. D., Birmingham.

\* Those marked with an asterisk are Members of the A.A.L.

- \*Swift, J., Bolton.  
 Thomas, J. W., Blackburn.  
 Thomson, Miss E. I., Glasgow.  
 \*Thwaites, Miss E. E., Birmingham.
- Tuffin, Miss M. E., Newport.  
 Winterflood, R. C., Chiswick.  
 Wood, A. G., Bolton.

## SECTION II.—BIBLIOGRAPHY.

32 Candidates sat.

Honours —, Merits 3, Passes 19.

*Merits.*

- \*Chivers, H., Kidderminster.  
 Mackenzie, Miss I., Leicester.
- Stuffins, H. J., Maidstone.

*Passes.*

- \*Asman, Miss W., Birmingham.  
 Drewery, R. F., Hull.  
 Edwards, Miss E. H., Aberystwyth.  
 French, Miss I. W., Glasgow.  
 \*Gayford, Miss K. M., Norwich.  
 Harvey, Miss H. M., Aberystwyth.  
 Hutchings, F. G. B., Leeds.  
 Jackson, L. C., Chesterfield.  
 Jones, Miss E. L., Aberystwyth.  
 \*Leggatt, D. R., Woking.
- \*Leighton, G. F., Middlesbrough.  
 \*Pyman, Miss E. E., Ipswich.  
 Rice, Miss C. E., Hove.  
 Searson, J., Glasgow.  
 Shaw, Miss M. P., Glasgow.  
 \*Timms, Miss E., Birmingham.  
 Weipers, Miss C. B., Glasgow.  
 \*Wise, Miss H. C., Cheltenham.  
 \*Woodham, W. H., Wood Green.

## SECTION III.—CLASSIFICATION.

90 Candidates sat.

Honours —, Merits —, Passes 35.

*Passes.*

- \*Allday, Miss O. M., Birmingham.  
 Bertie, Miss O. B., Aberystwyth.  
 Bilton, H. A., Hull.  
 Bioletti, R., Liverpool.  
 \*Davies, J. H., Birmingham.  
 \*Dean, Miss W., Ilkley.  
 Duff, Miss M. E., Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
 Ferguson, Miss F. W., Glasgow.  
 \*Fox, Miss W., Worthing.  
 Gardner, F. M., Sheffield.  
 Gee, Miss J., Wigan.  
 \*Gilliland, Miss A. M., Birkenhead.  
 \*Hannaford, Miss B. K., Manchester.  
 Hunter, A., Glasgow.  
 \*Jones, Miss C. A., Liverpool.  
 King, Miss A. M., Bolton.  
 Leechman, Miss N. C., Croydon.  
 \*Lindsay, G. S. D., Tynemouth.  
 \*Madden, Miss C., Stockport.
- Marsh, Miss M., Darlington.  
 Martin, J., Edinburgh.  
 Milburn, Miss F. L., Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
 Musgrave, C. W., Croydon.  
 Osborne, Miss N., Derby.  
 Paton, W. B., Glasgow.  
 Pearce, T. D., St. Helens.  
 Pollard, Miss V. M., Bath.  
 Taylor, Miss P. M., Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
 \*Wadsworth, Miss N., Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
 \*West, Miss E. K., Croydon.  
 Wigley, Miss F. E., Manchester.  
 Williams, Miss E. M., Cardiff.  
 Williams, Miss G., Aberystwyth.  
 Williams, Miss M. J., Newport.  
 \*Wood, Miss N., Lowestoft.

## SECTION IV.—CATALOGUING.

72 Candidates sat.

Honours —, Merits —, Passes 36.

*Passes.*

- Adams, Miss C. C., Glasgow.  
 \*Ashworth, Miss M., Birkenhead.  
 Bertie, Miss O. B., Aberystwyth.  
 Black, Miss I. J., Manchester.  
 Brecknell, Miss E., Hereford.
- \*Broughton, Miss E., Chiswick.  
 Callan, Miss M. S., Glasgow.  
 \*Dent, Miss E. M., St. Marylebone.  
 Dowdy, Miss A. C., Ipswich.  
 Ellis, Miss C. H., Sunderland.

\* Those marked with an asterisk are Members of the A.A.L.

- \*Etchells, Miss D., Derby.  
 Ferrand, Miss E. M., Manchester.  
 \*Gilliam, J., Croydon.  
 Graham, Miss J. G., Glasgow.  
 Gregory, L., Manchester.  
 Healing, Miss W. J., Hove.  
 \*Hiles, C. R., Preston.  
 \*Hodson, Miss E. M., Liverpool.  
 \*Howarth, A., Bolton.  
 \*Howarth, H. H., Bolton.  
 Kraan, Mrs. H., Retford.  
 Luke, Miss A. B., Kirkcaldy.  
 \*Lynes, Miss A. G., Coventry.  
 McEwan, Miss C. R., Glasgow.  
 \*McMullen, Miss I. E. H., Woolwich.  
 Moore, Miss M., Derby.  
 Morris, Miss A., Bolton.  
 Peace, Miss A., Manchester.  
 \*Pummell, M. T., Fulham.  
 Rebentisch, F., Tottenham.  
 \*Shortle, W., Bolton.  
 Skilling, Miss E., Belfast.  
 \*Stonebridge, A. J. D., St. Marylebone.  
 Stuffs, H. J., Maidstone.  
 \*Tennant, Miss L. F., Wallasey.  
 \*Tillie, Miss H., Kingston-on-Thames.

## SECTION V.—LIBRARY ORGANISATION.

62 Candidates sat.

Honours —, Merits —, Passes 17.

*Passes.*

- Bebbington, J., Bolton.  
 Bennett, C., Warrington.  
 Burn, H., Carlisle.  
 Darbey, B. C., Wolverhampton.  
 Hall, J. G., Hull.  
 Hewitt, R., Manchester.  
 Lister, H. P., Sheffield.  
 McClellan, A. W., Tottenham.  
 \*Meachem, Miss C. E., Birmingham.  
 Melling, C., Wigan.  
 Mowat, F. C., Glasgow.  
 \*Rosser, Miss D. N., Birkenhead.  
 Stokes, Miss E., Coventry.  
 Taylor, Miss M. S., Coventry.  
 \*Verrell, Miss E. A., Croydon.  
 \*Walford, A. J., Stoke Newington.  
 Woodhouse, D. J., Manchester.

## SECTION VI.—LIBRARY ROUTINE.

114 Candidates sat.

Honours —, Merits —, Passes 41.

*Passes.*

- \*Beattie, Miss M., Derby.  
 Begg, Miss E., Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
 Bletcher, E., Sheffield.  
 Boyles, G. T., Smethwick.  
 \*Bridge, Miss D. G., Ipswich.  
 Carruthers, T. S., Edinburgh.  
 Chambers, Miss A., Sheffield.  
 Crompton, Miss E. M., Chiswick.  
 \*Copping, Miss C. F. M., Darlington.  
 \*Davey, Miss M. F., Worthing.  
 Edwards, A., Sheffield.  
 \*Fairweather, Miss E., Workson.  
 Gardner, F. M., Sheffield.  
 \*Goodwin, Miss A. M., Birmingham.  
 \*Gross, Miss E. B., Birmingham.  
 Hammond, J., Manchester.  
 Hartley, P. G., Leeds.  
 Hayward, Miss J., Coventry.  
 Hoskins, J. E., Bridgend.  
 Human, Miss L. A., Street, Somerset.  
 Johnson, Miss D. M., Birmingham.  
 Lord, N. C., Bolton.  
 MacMillan, Miss M., Glasgow.  
 Merriott, Miss L. E., Coventry.  
 Michel, C. W., Leeds.  
 Millward, Miss M. I., Birmingham.  
 Muir, A. R., Glasgow.  
 Norris, Miss D. M., Birmingham.  
 Pritchard, F. C., Birmingham.  
 Reynolds, J. D., Leeds.  
 \*Rule, A. J., Battersea.  
 Rust, A. H., Ilkley.  
 Smith, A., Aberystwyth.  
 \*Thorne, Miss W. K., The Library,  
 High Commissioner for India.  
 Thorold, Miss D. M., Ipswich.  
 \*Tillie, Miss H. A., Kingston-on-Thames.  
 Vickery, F. J., Croydon.  
 \*Warwick, Miss E., Liverpool.  
 Weaver, Miss R. M. B., Liverpool.  
 Williams, Miss G., Aberystwyth.  
 Williams, S. G., Cardiff.

\* Those marked with an asterisk are Members of the A.A.L.

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS.

(Books that should not be missed.)

Bennett (Arnold) and Knoblock (Edward). Mr. Prohack; a play.  
from Mr. Bennett's novel. (Chatto & Windus, 5/.)

Chesterton (G. K.). The judgment of Dr. Johnson; a comedy.  
(Sheed & Ward, 3/6.)

Colum (Padraic). The road round Ireland. (Macmillan, 17/-.)

A book of pen-pictures of Ireland, and of what Mr. Colum calls "the historic Irish people—the people who had centuries' disabilities for being Irish."

Defoe (Daniel). A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain,  
divided into circuits or journies. (Peter Davies, 2v., 63/-.)

Gives the text of the first edition, 1724-26, and avoids the later revisions which obscured the original character of the book, has Moll's maps, though these latter are reproduced on an inconveniently small scale, and includes general and bibliographical introductions by Mr. G. D. H. Cole. The edition is limited to one thousand copies.

Elstein (Noah). Israel in the kitchen; a play.  
(Sidgwick & Jackson, 3/6.)

In their effort to create a Jewish drama in England, the Jewish Drama League opened a competition, offering a prize of £50, and first-class production in London. Out of thirteen plays submitted the judges unanimously awarded the prize to Mr. Elstein's play.

Galsworthy (John). Castles in Spain, and other screeds.  
(Heinemann, 3/6.)

Reviewed in the February *Bookman*.

Griffith (Hubert). The tragic muse: a play. (Allen & Unwin, 3/6.)

Adapted from the novel by Henry James. Mr. Griffiths' *Iconoclasts, or the future of Shakespeare*, recently published in the To-day and To-morrow series, is interesting, especially the author's views on Shakespeare in modern dress.

Lucas (F. L.) (ed.). The complete works of John Webster.  
(Chatto & Windus, 4v., 72/-.)

After Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, Webster was perhaps the greatest of the Elizabethan dramatists. There has been no collected edition of his works since that of W. C. Hazlitt in 1857. It is worthy of note that Mr. Lucas attributes the greater share in *Sir Thomas Wyatt, Westward Ho!* and *Northwood Ho!* to Dekker, and therefore does not include them, as did Hazlitt, with Webster's work.

Mase (Georgina) (ed.). The book of the tree.  
(Peter Davies, 10/6.)

An outline of the literature of the tree, illustrated by passages forming an almost unbroken sequence from the age of the Vedas to the present day.

Moult (Thomas) (ed.). The best poems of 1927. (Cape, 6/-.)

Selected poems reprinted from English and American periodicals. *Frost* illustrates Mr. W. H. Davies' almost purely objective way of looking at Nature, while a happy inclusion is Mr. Humbert Wolfe's *Violins*.

Shadwell (Thomas). The complete works of Thomas Shadwell.

Ed. by Montague Summers. (Fortune Press, 5v., £5/5/-.)

"The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,  
But Shadwell never deviates into sense."

Dryden's *MacFlecknoe* banished Shadwell into an obscurity from which he has only now fully emerged. Mr. Summers' five large volumes will do much to make Shadwell's undoubted merits known. This is the first collected edition, and is limited to 1,290 copies.

A welcome reprint is that in the Traveller's Library of Mr. Middleton Murry's *The Evolution of an Interlectual*, originally published in 1920, and for some time now out of print. *The Problem of the Intelligentsia* has been omitted from this edition, and its place has been filled by the essays on the poems of Wilfred Owen, and on Barbellion's Journal.

G. E. H.

## THE DIVISIONS.

### YORKSHIRE DIVISION.

*Report of the Annual Meeting held at Leeds, on January 25th, 1928.*

The Annual Meeting of the Division was held at Leeds on January 25th, by kind permission of the Libraries and Arts Committee.

Nearly seventy members assembled at the Central Library, where motor buses were waiting to convey the party to three of the recently re-organised branch libraries at Compton Road, Burley and Bramley. Members were particularly interested in the fine examples of children's rooms which were evident at all three branches.

At 5.15 a civic welcome was accorded by the Lord Mayor (Alderman G. Ratcliffe), supported by the Chairman and Deputy Chairmen of the Libraries and Arts Committee (Councillor F. B. Simpson and Councillor H. Morris). After welcoming the members, the Lord Mayor paid a tribute to the valuable work of the City Librarian, Mr. R. J. Gordon.

In his reply to the Lord Mayor, Mr. F. Haigh, President of the Division, said he had been specially impressed by the way in which Leeds catered for the people through its Libraries. He further stated that the juvenile rooms would constitute a strong deterrent to the mischief caused from children roaming the streets.

Tea was very kindly provided in the Lord Mayor's Room, by the Committee of the Leeds Public Libraries.

After tea the Annual Business Meeting was held, the President's remarks were followed by the Honorary Secretary's Annual Report, and the Honorary Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement. The appointment of Officers and the result of the election for Committee were announced as follows:—

*President*: Mr. F. Haigh (Halifax).

*Vice-Presidents*: Miss E. F. Wragg (Wakefield); Mr. G. W. Strother (Leeds).

*Hon. Treasurer*: Mr. W. Procter (Leeds).

*Hon. Secretary*: Mr. G. P. Jackson (Leeds).

### *Committee*:

Miss M. Heap, Keighley.

Miss M. Hummerston, Leeds.

Miss K. Johnson, Bradford.

Miss M. Walker, Huddersfield.

Mr. S. Firth, Sheffield.

Mr. C. Hope, Leeds.

Mr. T. Kirkpatrick, Bradford.

Mr. W. Marr, Sheffield.

Mr. T. W. Muskett, Huddersfield.

Mr. R. W. Parsons, Bradford.

Mr. E. Robertshaw, Bradford.

Mr. A. Thompson, York.

The remainder of the evening was devoted to a most enjoyable whist drive, after which hearty votes of thanks to the Lord Mayor, the Libraries and Arts Committee and members who had assisted with the arrangements, brought to a close a much appreciated and highly successful meeting.

G. P. JACKSON, *Hon. Sec.*

## NORTH-EAST DIVISION.

The Annual Meeting will be held at the Scotswood Branch Library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Wednesday, March 14th, 1928.

*Programme.*

2.30.—Meet at Quayside Post Office.

2.45.—Visit to Trinity House, Broad Chare. *Note.*—Out of courtesy to the Trinity House Authorities, Members are requested to keep strictly to these times.

4.45.—Tea at Gregson's Café, Milburn House, Dean Street. Members will be the guests of Councillor J. Grantham, J.P., Chairman of the Public Libraries Committee, Newcastle-upon Tyne. Members should afterwards leave the Central Station for the Scotswood Branch, travelling by either Scotswood or Throckley tram car not later than 6.15.

6.30.—Committee Meeting.

7.—General Meeting.

Members should signify their intention to be present at tea to the Hon. Secretary, not later than the first post on Monday, March 12th.

[*Reports from the South-Eastern Division, the Midland Division and the Annual Report of the Yorkshire Division are unavoidably held over.*—HON. EDITOR.]

## OUR LIBRARY.

Morley (Raymond). *The Practice of politics (Reading with a Purpose Series)*. A.L.A., Chicago. (pp. 36. Paper Covers.)

Garland (Hamlin). *The Westward march of American settlement (Reading with a Purpose Series)*. A.L.A., Chicago. (Illus. pp. 35. Paper covers.)

Mr. Morley gives a candid, interesting sketch of the methods of politicians, and of the various political machines which contribute towards the process of government, municipal and national. He gives a very brief history of the various great American parties and their leaders. He asserts, that though differing in name, they exist for the same purpose—to secure the reins of government and the spoils which go with them. We hope the graft system is not the mainspring of American politics as pictured by Mr. Morley.

The author's method is to study politics through the lives of the political leaders; accordingly, the books recommended are all biographies, with but one exception. Had the author added his own book "Outline of government in the United States," it could have formed an initial study, and would co-ordinate the whole course. This little book is very welcome, for it has the effect of creating a desire for further study of the subject.

Mr. Garland's booklet deals with "The man who took his axe, his rifle, and his young wife, and moved out into the wilderness, to open the clearing in the forest, and to build a cabin home." He does not record historically the various struggles of the pioneers against the Indians, the French and the English, but he gives a vivid picture of the effect of these struggles upon the character of the settler.

The recommended books with two exceptions are all novels and include Mr. Garland's own autobiographic work, "A Son of the Middle Border." This fine novel is not so well known in England as it should be, nor is Rölvaag's "Giant in the Earth," also mentioned by Mr. Garland. This is one of the best handbooks in a most useful series, and we are not surprised to learn that recently 10,000 copies were ordered by one firm alone, for distribution to their employees.

J.M.K.



**Grand Rapids Public Library. List of Books on Furniture, with descriptive notes. (pp. 143. Boards.)**

The Grand Rapids Public Library, it will be remembered, goes into more homes than any other municipal institution, except the City Water Works, and an examination of this fine list of Books on Furniture makes the reason for its great popularity hard to discover. The Librarian, Mr. Samuel H. Ranck, whose article on Ventilation in the December number of the *Architectural Forum* should be read by all who are interested in the subject, modestly insists on his publication's being entitled "A List," and not a catalogue; for, he says, "it does not include articles in magazines." Some day he hopes to issue a real catalogue, which will give bibliographical details, including the collation of each book. If this mere "list" is an earnest of what that catalogue will be, then it will be one of the best catalogues in existence, not forgetting such classics as the Catalogue of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Collection of Classical Literature.

The list is alphabetically arranged under the authors' names, with a full subject index, and includes many English and Continental publications. The Librarian of Shoreditch Public Library and the librarians of other libraries where special collections of furniture books are made will find the volume very useful for checking their own stocks, and we believe they will be amazed at the completeness of the collection. Some indication of the variety and range of the stock in this section may be indicated by stating that it not only includes a first edition of Chippendale's world-famous "Gentleman and cabinet-maker's director," but also Maurice Adams' "My book of Furniture" (London, 1926).

**The Elements of Book-Collecting, by Iola A. Williams. (Cloth. pp. 170. Elkin Mathews and Marrot. 6/- nett.)**

It was a happy thought of the publishers to get so pleasant a bibliographical writer as Mr. Iola Williams to ride his hobby horse in public. Mr. Williams has made the chaste pages of *The London Mercury* exciting for many readers by his monthly notes on bibliography and allied subjects. He has now, for the instruction of those who are just beginning to collect books, and for the delight of those whose homes are already beautifully untidy with books, written a most fascinating introduction to the gentle art. Pardon the *cliché*, but if there is, indeed, a gentle art, it is that of book-collecting. Yet even this innocent pastime may engender the most violent passions in its votaries, as well we knew the other day, when a friend of ours boasted of having just bagged the collected edition of De Quincey in blue cloth, published by Black, for sixpence a volume, at one of those stalls, which may be termed "the poor relation" of the book-shop, an hour spent at which Mr. Williams thinks is usually nothing "but an hour pleasantly wasted."

The author writes clearly and easily of "The Pleasures and logic of Book-Collecting, of the sizes of books, of the parts of a book, of books imperfect and perfect, of issues and editions, of the way to describe a book, of the formation of a collection, and of modern first editions"; concluding with a few suggestions and with a list of some books of reference.

Students of librarianship will notice that many of these chapters cover parts of the syllabus in Section Two—Bibliography, of the Library Association Examinations, and we can think of no more pleasant teacher of these matters than Mr. Williams.

Assistants will find the list of books of reference a useful guide, for there is not one mentioned therein with which they should not be well acquainted, and on which they may not be questioned.

The chapter entitled "A Few Suggestions" leads one reader at least to

think that the author may some day write a whole book about his own collection, and of his personal adventures in book-collecting. He has acquired the admirable art, as readers of the *Mercury* and of his delightful anthologies will remember, of digging out odd little poems from between the dingy covers of forgotten books. Unlike Dr. Johnson, he can readily distinguish between a louse and a flea, and for our delight he makes both of these poetical insects interesting. F.S.S.

## SHORT NOTICES

*of Reports, Pamphlets, Bulletins, etc.*

### The Library Journal, January, 1928.

Contents: Some reference books of 1927, by I. G. Mudge (an invaluable and detailed survey; three articles on University Libraries—planning, service, and problems; the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation, by J. E. de Vos Van Steenwijk; a Library system for England and Wales, by Sir F. G. Kenyon; and A Union List of Serials, by F. K. W. Drury, etc. This last article is of great interest since a similar bibliography will one day have to be compiled for English libraries. By "serials" is meant periodicals, newspapers, annuals, reports, year-books, transactions of societies; and now, students in all parts of America and Canada can locate the whereabouts of files of these items. The labour of compilation has been immense, and the estimated cost was 36,000 dollars. Forty-one libraries subscribed 300 dollars each for three years, and the work was therefore commenced in 1922.

### Bulletin of the American Library Association, January, 1928.

A record of activity which the new Secretary of our own Library Association will probably regard with envious eyes. The next few years, however, should see considerable changes in the work and position of the English Library Association.

### The Library Lions (Published by the Staff Association of the New York Public Library).

There is a funny article in this number of a most enjoyable publication, entitled "Random Thoughts in the Mind of a Librarian Attending a Certain Conference" which is recommended to all with a sense of humour and a memory of past meetings.

### Hornsey Public Libraries Quarterly Review, January, 1928.

### Halifax Readers' Guide, January, 1928.

### Ipswich Library Journal, January, 1928.

### Bulletin of Bibliography, and Dramatic Index. (The F. W. Faxon Co., Boston.)

Among many bibliographical lists of first class importance we particularly draw attention to an authoritative "Bibliography of Spanish Books for a Medium-sized Library: a list of 100 standard Works."

### Stepney Libraries Bulletin, February, 1928.

An interesting publication which is distinguished by good cataloguing. The list of 100 representative works of Fiction is well done, and should prove very useful. We notice Frenssen has slipped into Scandinavian literature, however, and we deplore the omission of Proust from the French section. Why is "Marie Grubbe," by J. P. Jacobsen, so persistently neglected by critics and readers when talking of Scandinavian literature?

## Pittsburgh Monthly Bulletin, January, 1928.

This publication is of great use to those learning to classify by Dewey, as the books listed herein are well annotated and classified.

Grand Rapids Public Library Bulletin.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

Public Library,  
77, High Street, Whitechapel, E.1.

6th February, 1928.

To the Editor of "The Library Assistant."

Dear Sir,

## Re UNION OF LIBRARY SOCIETIES.

I am very pleased to see that at last a few of our members are taking an interest in the affairs of our Association. It is quite a change from the usual apathy displayed.

I quite agree with all that the "Three Members of the A.A.L." have to say, and I hope that we shall always have our own Association.

I would suggest that to get the feeling of the majority on this question, a space be allotted on the ballot paper at the next election of Officers and Council. This would enable all members to voice their opinions.

In the meantime I hope there will be an opportunity for further discussion on the subject.

Yours faithfully, HENRY G. GRAY.

To the Editor of "The Library Assistant."

SIR,—The letter of "Three Members of the A.A.L." is an excellent illustration of the mischief that will be done by suggesting the amalgamation of library societies at this stage. But the letter is not an answer to the proposal to federate. Federation cannot trammel the activities of any association: it allows freedom to all, and provides for joint action in projects for general professional welfare and for progress in the library movement.

The L.A. is not an Association of *Chief Librarians*; it is not devoted to their interests; it has done more work for the training of young librarians than in any other direction. In the States there is one main Association. The assistants in it outvote the chief librarians; but that is of no consequence to anybody because the members have come to recognise that the interests of one and all are identical. The A.L.A.'s educational programme does not stop short at correspondence classes. It has issued scores of handbooks on technical subjects. It has been triumphantly successful in improving the status of all grades of American librarians. What the A.L.A. has accomplished will never be accomplished on this side by several societies working independently. Forget the term assistant, think only of librarians, realise that a "chief" librarian is only *primus inter pares*; then federation will be an easy process.

Yours faithfully,  
ERNEST A. SAVAGE.

[Further correspondence on this subject is unavoidably held over until the next issue.—*Hon. Editor.*]

OF DIRECT USE TO  
ALL LIBRARY ASSISTANTS!

# The Elements OF Book-Collecting

By IOLO A. WILLIAMS.

Crown 8vo.

Cloth gilt 8s. 6d. net.

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## SOME PRESS OPINIONS.

"He gives inexperienced collectors not only much good advice . . . but the necessary instruction to enable them to detect imperfections . . . a really useful handbook, very different from anything of the kind that we have hitherto seen."—*Times Literary Supplement*.

"Mr. Williams's deft little work . . . is an ideal starting point for any budding bibliophile . . . presents to the neophyte the a b c of his craft . . . suggests unexplored fields of bibliography."—Michael Sadleir in the *Observer*.

"Not only recommend this work to the book-collector but the young librarian and student of bibliography will find it of considerable value."—*The Library World*.

"Packed with good practical information and advice . . . such as is needed by librarians as well as collectors."—*The Library Assn. Record*.

"Just the book required by anyone who is forming a library . . . written both wisely and well by a bookman for bookmen."—*Birmingham Post*.

"Much useful information of a technical kind."—H. L. Morrow in *The Daily News*.

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